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DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AWARDS \$1.5 MILLION TO MISSOURI FOR PRESIDENT'S DNA INITIATIVE AND CRIME-SOLVING FORENSIC SERVICES

KANSAS CITY, MO - Deputy Associate Attorney General Tracy A. Henke announced today that the Justice Department has awarded \$1.3 million in DNA grants throughout Missouri to solve crime and exonerate the innocent as part of President Bush's DNA initiative, *Advancing Justice Through DNA Technology*. These are the first grants to be awarded under the President's initiative, a five-year, more than \$1 billion effort to eliminate casework and the convicted offender backlog; improve crime lab capacity; provide DNA training; provide for post-conviction DNA testing; and conduct testing to identify missing persons. An additional \$290,589 is being awarded in Missouri to improve criminal justice forensic services.

"DNA is an extraordinary crime-fighting tool," said Deputy Associate Attorney General Henke. "Many survivors and families of victims will get much-needed relief from years of waiting, when DNA identifies and convicts the perpetrators in their cases. Kansas City has already made great progress in solving crime using DNA evidence. The Justice Department is committed to further help Missouri clear its backlog of unanalyzed DNA samples and enhance its forensic programs."

In 2003, information from the Pennsylvania DNA database helped convict a man of the 1998 murder of a woman who had been found dead of multiple stab wounds in her apartment. In 1999, this man was convicted of robbing and assaulting another woman. When his DNA profile was run through the Pennsylvania DNA database, DNA found at the murder scene matched the man's profile. He was later sentenced to life in prison. More information about DNA technology is available at www.dna.gov.

Today, the Deputy Associate Attorney General announced the following grants for Missouri:

Total FY 2004 DNA Initiative Funding Awarded: \$1,263,232

County of Saint Louis:	\$95,641 (DNA laboratory capacity enhancement) \$83,168 (DNA forensic casework backlog reduction)
Southeast Missouri State University:	\$34,151 (DNA laboratory capacity enhancement)
MSSU Regional Crime Laboratory:	-more- \$44,448 (DNA laboratory capacity enhancement)
Saint Charles County:	\$44,505 (DNA laboratory capacity enhancement)
Missouri State Highway Patrol:	\$161,577 (DNA laboratory capacity enhancement) \$236,981 (DNA forensic casework backlog reduction)

Saint Louis Metropolitan Police Department: \$90,940 (DNA laboratory capacity enhancement)
\$105,970 (DNA forensic casework backlog reduction)

Board of Commissioners Kansas City Police Department: \$149,439 (DNA laboratory capacity enhancement)

Board of Police Commissioners: \$216,412 (DNA forensic casework backlog reduction)

Other FY 2004 Forensics Grants Awarded: \$290,589

Missouri Department of Public Safety: \$210,565 (Coverdell formula grant)

County of Saint Louis: \$80,024 (Coverdell discretionary grant)

Total FY 2004 DNA and Forensics Grants: \$1,553,821

Throughout the country there is a large backlog of unanalyzed DNA samples, which can significantly delay criminal investigations. According to a study funded by the Justice Department, there are 542,700 DNA records waiting to be tested.

Earlier this week, Attorney General John Ashcroft announced the total funding for the President's DNA initiative is nearly \$95 million. The initiative aims to reduce the DNA analysis backlog and allow law enforcement agencies to use DNA evidence promptly as a routine law enforcement tool. The Justice Department has awarded the grants directly to the local jurisdictions, which usually have the greatest DNA backlog. The grants will be administered by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), the research, development and evaluation component of the Justice Department.

NIJ awarded \$38 million for DNA casework; \$28 million for DNA capacity building for crime lab improvement; \$4.7 million for DNA training; \$7.9 million for DNA research and development; \$1.9 million for DNA testing for missing persons; and over \$2.3 million for general forensics research and development. In addition, NIJ has made available over \$14 million for convicted offender testing, \$9.5 million for Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grants, and \$42 million for crime lab improvement. This funding represents the largest amount of money provided by the Justice Department to support state and local forensic efforts.

DNA is deoxyribonucleic acid, the material of chromosomes, which identifies a person's unique genetic makeup. Databases of convicted offenders' DNA help provide law enforcement with leads in unsolved cases in which a suspect's blood, semen, saliva, or hair was left behind.

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Newer DNA analysis techniques can yield results from biological evidence invisible to the naked eye, even when the evidence is contaminated. Police departments throughout the country are reexamining unsolved rape and homicide cases using advanced methods of detecting identifiable DNA. Newly processed DNA profiles are uploaded into the FBI database, CODIS, so the data can be compared with evidence in the national system. Matches are reported to law enforcement and then verified by obtaining and analyzing a second sample from the suspect.

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